

KIN BEHAVIOR

THE GROUP

571 The relationships of the ancient Papago, economic and social,
602 were almost all within the kinship circle. "We love our relatives."
"We would do anything for our relatives." "A purified scalp works
for you like a relative." "We like to go to feasts to see our relatives."

[576 Address by the kinship term was the regular greeting, the regular
783] form of applause and the final rite for receiving a neophyte back to
daily life after purification. White residents, critical of Papago
self-government remark: "A Papago elected to office will consider
no one but his relatives."

● 596 Anciently, the only standardized relationships were within the
609 extended family. People outside it should not be chosen as friends
because they could not be relied on. Any exchange of gifts made
with them should be in the nature of a trade, with full payment
immediately and no credit. Even though near neighbors, they
remained in an outer sphere unless they were judged desirable
connections in a marriage alliance. Then they were investigated,
approached and finally drawn within the active circle of kin, to
have their share in companionship, service and gift exchange.
602 Within this kin circle, there were no rigid rules. Papago had no
avoidances and no joking relationships. The marriage regulations
were tempered with economic convenience. The particular group
of kin to whom one owed constant duty was not the nearest in blood
but the nearest geographically.

361 This pragmatic use of a kinship formula was in agreement with
602 the Papago mode of life. Villages were scattered over an immense
desert country where travel was difficult, because of the absence
of drinking water and a relative removed to another village became
almost inaccessible. But relatives close at hand must be a constant
reliance. They were the people called on for cooperative labor in
house building, ditch digging, planting, harvesting, spinning, arrow
making. A family's actual existence might depend on cordial
relations with them. "We would do anything for our relatives" had
the connotation "And our relatives would do anything for us." The
cordial relations were an economic investment

602 Such an investment was rarely made in non-relatives, since they
could not be trusted to repay, having their own more intimate
obligations. But a relative valued his kin status and would pay,

that they could support a wife without their fathers' aid. The family still raised food for its own support but now the store was available for bartering the surplus and investment in gifts could be given up. It was given up by some and since the others could not rely on the return which was once unquestioned, they too became slack or capricious. The gift system, built up by economic conditions, was being broken down by the same means. 177

Through all the stress, the institution which showed the greatest vitality was that of the patriarchal family. Though its distant dependents were lopped off, though its young people were educated to new desires at school, though some of them even seceded to wage work, a core of the family kept to the old customs. The writer has talked with many an educated young man who would make no plans without the permission of his conservative father. She has found men unable to take paying work because the family head had requested their services. The sense of security and importance derived from membership in such a group still bulks large in Papago life.

One of the reasons for the survival of patriarchal organization was that the family, in the majority of cases, kept its old lands and worked them jointly as before. Where the means of support was chiefly agriculture, change had to be slow, even with the entrance of money into the situation. Farms were not big enough to produce much money by sale of produce and there were relatives expecting to share the harvest unless actual concealment was practised. A Papago living and working in Tucson like any White, [596] • told the writer that on the farm on the reservation in which he shares the whole extended family is still invited to come and help themselves at harvest. Many of them make no return and so the farm barely supports itself.

But, with cattle raising, there was opportunity for further development. The Papago have had cattle since 1700 but it was only recently that they realized the possibility of raising them as a business. Beef cattle were allowed to roam wild and only hunted and killed when the family needed meat. As the country was settled and the deer and antelope frightened off, cattle raising moved gradually into the place once occupied by hunting. A patriarchal family had formerly had, in all its component households, no more than one or two hunters, bringing in ten or fifteen deer a year. Now such a family might kill the same number of cows, distributing the meat just as they once distributed venison. One or more of their young men was designated as cowboy while the others did his share of the farmwork and bought his clothes. The cattle ran on the

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844 I did not know just when the time would be, but I knew that I felt pain when I stooped out of our little door. I said to my husband's aunt: "I think I will go to the Little House. I would not like such a dreadful thing to happen as for me to be caught inside the house in childbirth." "Well, go," she said. This was the first I had said to her or to my mother-in-law either, the whole thing being so new.

There was a gully behind our house and the Little House was on the other side of it. When I reached the near edge of that gully, I thought I had better run. I ran fast; I wanted to do the right thing. But I dropped my first baby in the middle of the gully. My aunt came and snipped the baby's navel string with her long finger nail. Then we went on to the Little House. My sisters-in-law said to me afterward: "Why didn't you tell us? We didn't know you were suffering in there. We heard you laughing." I said: "Well, it wasn't my mouth that hurt. It was my middle."

I stayed in the Little House, for that was what my father had told me to do. "When you have your first baby, don't come into the house. Stay out until the moon comes around again. Then go to the medicine man and be cleansed."

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846 So I stayed alone there for a month, and the family brought me raw blood, which I cooked. I ate no salt until the end of the baby's navel string fell off, so his navel would not be sore. Then my husband and I and the baby went to the medicine man, and he gave us all white clay to eat as he had given me when I became a maiden. But he did not give my baby a name. [263]
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[553] We were modern and I let a priest name him, Bastian.

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596 It was nice in our house. My young brothers-in-law had married and I had their two wives to keep me company. Feather Leaves was one, and Singing Dawn. We girls did the cooking for my mother-in-law and left her to her baskets. At night when we ladled the gruel out of the pot, we all ate two and two, each married couple with one bowl, drinking by turns.

My mother-in-law managed our work. "Come," she would say, "get your carrying baskets. Let us go for food."

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[557] So we would go laughing out over the flat land to dig the roots or up in the hills to cut the cholla. I carried my baby in its cradle board on top of the carrying net. While we picked into a smaller basket, I leaned the carrying net against a tree and balanced the baby on top.

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727 Once I was digging roots like that and I got very tired. I made a pile of earth with my digging stick, put my head on it and lay down. In front of me was a hole in the earth made by the rains, and there hung a gray spider, going up and down, up and down, on its long thread. I began to go to sleep and I said to it: "Won't you fall?"

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626 economic and social obligations. Only when these sanctions fail to bring the nonconformists into line is there recourse to the village chief or tribal court.

Despite this rather strict control by the pressure of family and public opinion, there is considerable freedom of decision in personal matters. The balance between individual rights and family authority seems to be carefully preserved. There is no subservience but rather an attitude of respect and conformity because "that is the right thing to do," and not because the individual is forced into line.

This attitude is carried over to all duly constituted authority. The Papago are very much individuals, yet they respect law and custom and abide by the decisions of those who, in their opinion, are authorized to make them. Where parental or political authority has broken down among the Papago, it is often because an attempt has been made to force upon them new patterns which do not fit in with the old.

RELATIVES

602 Generally speaking, the Papago consider as relatives to be addressed by a
 596 kinship term all persons within the third degree of relationship. Beyond this degree, a relationship is often acknowledged, but it has little social significance. Those who are within the third degree may be called the extended family, and, in Papago life, it is they who are important.

596 Paradoxically, the extended family is a loosely organized but strongly knit social unit. It is loosely organized in that members move in and out of its primary locale and sometimes settle permanently some distance away. They also move in and out of the sphere of economic co-operation. Moreover, unlike the family household, the extended family does not ordinarily have a head or clearly defined gradations of authority. Probably in the past it was more definitely organized as an extended patriarchal group. Despite the present lack of organization, the extended family is a readily definable group based on very strong ties. Blood relationship between two individuals within the conventionally recognized third degree is of fundamental importance, and economic, ritual, and social aspects of life are all affected by it.

The general pattern of relationships in the extended family is much like that of the immediate household. Indeed, a cousin who lives near by is likely to be more important than a brother who has resided for some time in a distant place. Members of the extended family do much co-operative work. If a man needs help in plowing, building a house, or cutting posts, he usually asks one or more of his relatives to help him, for "relatives can be depended on," and "it is much easier to reach an understanding with them." Sometimes three

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or four related men will do their plowing, weed-cutting, or harvesting together. A large cattle-owner will pay his relatives in cash, but the usual return is in labor. 596

Associated with the necessity for co-operation is the custom of exchanging gifts among relatives. In the old days gifts—usually of food—were exchanged frequently and regularly between related households. No return was asked, but the recipient was always expected to make a similar gift in the future. It is probable that this device was developed to insure the survival of the group by more equitably distributing the supply of food and other necessities, although it was never mere barter. Together with the custom of assisting relatives, the gift exchange was a form of investment, as Underhill points out.⁶⁰² The custom acquired overtones of social significance, and the gift became a symbol of esteem and solidarity among kinsfolk. Today if a family has a surplus of anything—as when a steer is butchered or many rabbits are killed—portions are sent to members of the extended family,⁴³¹ and sooner or later a return gift is received. No thanks are voiced, except indirectly to other people through praise of the giver's generosity. Although the gift exchange seems to have lost most of its economic character and to have survived only as a social custom, it is still important. If individuals or families who can do so do not give or return gifts, they are looked at askance.

All members of the extended family have a strong feeling of responsibility toward one another. If an old couple live alone, a child is often sent to live with and help them. If they are in need and their own children are unable or unwilling to take care of them, the relatives feel it is their duty to help. So strong is this feeling that, when the distribution of relief supplies was begun during the depression, the Papago requested that some form of work be required in return, lest the system of family responsibility break down and the solidarity and independence of the people be destroyed. Throughout the lean years, the number of families continually on relief rolls remained very small. 596

Family relationship also carries an obligation to settle disputes amicably. Regarding one suit brought over the division of a field among relatives, the villagers remarked, "And they are closely related! They should be able to settle it among themselves without having to take it to court and say all those mean things." Papago believe that recourse to legal authority should be taken only by those who are not related. The old system is breaking down, and disputes which would have been settled by relatives in the old days are now being brought to court. In the eastern districts of the Reservation the effective sanc- 578 691

1. *Op. cit.*, pp. 42, 108.

2. Gift exchange is now being extended to include close friends who are not relatives.

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tions are now changing from social to legal, but in the more conservative western sections few, if any, family disputes are taken to court.

574 Not all activities among relatives are dictated by such sober considerations as economic necessity and family pride. The Papago are fond of visiting, and relatives are always welcome. The visitor is given a small gift of food to symbolize the host's happiness at his visit and the affection he bears him. In the old days it was inconceivable for one to visit an unrelated household. Today the men are freer to visit whomever they please, but if a woman ventures to visit an unrelated friend, someone is likely to remark, "Why should she go down there? Hasn't she anything to do at home [i.e., in her own family]?" Now that children are forming close friendships outside the family, at school and later on jobs, this insularity is beginning to break down. Still—though some relatives are more compatible than others—hospitality is offered principally to the extended family.

608 Among the Catholic Papago the family group has been widened to include persons not necessarily related by blood—godparents. According to both Sonora and Roman Catholic teaching, a child must be sponsored in baptism by a godfather and a godmother. This requirement the Papago integrated with characteristic ease into their own social structure, and godparents are now part of the extended family. They pray at the child's bedside if he is critically ill, and, if he dies, they may prepare the body for burial. Not only are they responsible for seeing that the child has proper religious training; they also serve as secondary parents. If the child should be orphaned and no relatives can care for him, the godparents will take charge of him.

A warm and close relationship is established not only between the child and his godparents but also between the two families. Parents and godparents call each other *compahli* and *comahli*, from the Spanish *compadre* ("co-father") and *comadre* ("co-mother"). One pair of godparents serves for all the children of a family. If the godparents are man and wife, they will ask the parents of their godchildren to serve as sponsors for their own children. Children of both pairs call each other by the kin terms for older and younger siblings. The rights and obligations of relatives are extended to godparents and their children, but these extensions are not so vital a part of the family system as among the Arizona Yaqui, who have a similar arrangement.¹⁰

596 Today there is no wider kin group among the Papago than the extended

10. See Edward H. Spicer, *Pacru: A Yaqui Village in Arizona*, pp. 91-116. The extended family was almost nonexistent among the Yaqui in Arizona as a result of war, deportation, and emigration, and thus the ceremonial sponsors took the place of the extended family. With the Papago, among whom the extended family is strong, the ceremonial sponsorship is only an added security, and therefore is not the elaboration of the family system that it is among the Yaqui.

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Today there is no wider kin group among the Papago than the extended family. One type of kinship terminology which is dying out on the Reservation has been correlated by Underhill with a former sib structure.¹¹ The several different terms for "father" in this terminology seem to have indicated patrilineal lines. The significance of these terms today is difficult to determine, for they are being replaced rapidly by the generalized term for "father" (*auk*) or, in many families, by "daddy." It is safe to say that no well-developed clan concept survives and that the present concept of the family and the extended family has not changed radically within the past generation.

The old people say that, when I'toi created men, he called the first one a Coyote, the next a Buzzard, the third a Coyote, and so on until all mankind (i.e., all the Papago) was divided into two groups. The younger people today hardly know to which group they belong, and some say that they belong to both; even for the elders the terms seem to have little significance except on ceremonial occasions, when they form the basis of standardized joking.

The Papago have no other formalized humor as do many Indian tribes, but jokes and teasing are the salt of daily life. Low and spontaneous laughter rises whenever the Desert People are gathered together, or the occasion is indeed a serious one.

MAKING A LIVING TOGETHER

In Papago society the household is the fundamental economic unit, and each member does his share of the work necessary to make a living in this difficult environment. Men are responsible for tilling the fields and caring for the livestock; women manage the domestic essentials; children help with the household or farm chores according to their strength and ability. The division of labor is thus fairly definite, but all work together when necessary. Women and children help bring in the crops and gather wild plants and fruits. Boys of ten or eleven often plow.

Both men and women make articles for sale or barter. Most women know how to weave baskets; a few make pottery or occasionally sew for others. The men tan leather and braid ropes of rawhide or horsehair. Money earned by handicrafts is thought of as belonging to the artisan rather than to the group, but in a society where incomes are low, a considerable proportion of such earnings must be used for family needs.

Since the introduction of wage work, some members of the family, particularly the young adults, are beginning to feel less obligation to contribute to the household. Most of them, however, continue to help, either bringing home provisions or sending money. Wage-earners who do not assist the family are

11. Op. cit., pp. 32-33.

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464 seldom asked to do so, but neglect of this obligation soon becomes known, and the offender is severely censured by persons outside the household.

423 Just as each family member does his share toward maintaining the group, so each has an interest in the means of subsistence. As previously noted, all
428 land belongs to the tribe, and families are allowed to use as much as they need
596 on assignment by the village or district council. Fields ordinarily continue to be used by the same family after the death of its head. All the sons inherit equally, sometimes without division. Thus, ideally, all family members, even though they are not living with the group, are entitled to use these fields as needed, but nowadays there are occasional difficulties when absent members wish to return to the land.

422 Cattle and horses are individually owned, although those belonging to various members of the family are usually herded together. Each family has
428 its own brand, some small difference in the mark designating individual ownership. The head of the house may give certain animals to each of his children as they grow up, but on his death the main herd usually goes to the new head of the house unless other arrangements had been made. The tribal code of laws has provisions for wills after the white fashion, and a dispute over inheritance can be brought before the tribal court if no amicable settlement can be made otherwise.

231 The strong attachment of the Papago to their fields doubtless dates from
868 tribal prehistory, but cattle and horses have also become highly important since
[191] their acquisition from whites. The active life of many a Papago man centers in his horses and cattle, and they are the first interest of all little boys. In early childhood a boy begins to swing a rope and lasso stumps, piles of bedding, chickens, and dogs. He runs at a gallop, patting himself as he would a horse, or seizes a stick and canters off. Later he learns to ride, drive the horses to water, and take the reins of the family wagon. He breathes in the excitement of roping and throwing and learns to distinguish brands. Very early he knows which animals in the family herd belong to him, and he sells a steer in his turn when the family needs money. Finally, he is allowed to take part in roundups, to sleep out with the men, to listen to stories around the campfire under the clear stars. He is particularly proud of his horses; he knows that people will regard him with respect because he owns them.

231 Horses, rather than cattle, are the prestige animals. They are often of little economic value, at least in the numbers now owned by the Papago, for many more are kept than can be used in farm and range work, and a recent epidemic of dourine has prevented the sale of horses for any use but slaughter. A Papago does not ordinarily know exactly how many head of cattle he has, but he

The principal aboriginal crops were corn, beans, and squash, to which the Spanish missionaries added wheat, kidney beans, lentils, vetch, chick peas, and possibly watermelons. These new crops, however, were not grown in significant quantities until the last few generations. Wheat could be planted in February and harvested in May, and corn was regularly planted in July or August when the summer rains came; thus two grain crops a year became possible, greatly increasing the agricultural potential of the area, although it was still limited by the extreme variation and scarcity of rainfall.

The typical family was made up of the parents, their children, and the wives and children of the sons. Such units were grouped into villages with a tendency for village members to be related through the paternal line. Like other southern and western Arizona groups, the family was the important economic unit, with each family responsible for its own subsistence.

Religious practices were centered around the recurring events of the annual economic cycle interspersed by many curing and other personal crisis ceremonies. The regular annual round of ceremonies included as its most important events a rain ceremony in early summer, after the gathering of the fruit of the giant cactus, at which the fermented juice of the fruit was drunk, and a deer dance in the autumn or early winter when the people had moved into their mountain localities from the summer field villages.

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This Papago family including parents and sometimes another adult, with 2 or 3 children is a comparatively smaller unit than native families living on European owned South African farms, for example. There Dutch and English settlers also moved into native held lands, and a class of permanent native farm laborers has grown up. Their average household includes slightly more than 3 adults, and 5 children.¹ This is about the size of the Papago extended family living as a household on the reserves. "Most often, and ideally, a household consists of the old parents, unmarried sons and daughters, and married sons with their wives and children--three generations in all."² It reflects the fact that living on European operated farms is new to the Desert People, a move accomplished by biological family units in the younger age groups. Only recently as younger Papagos have gone to school and learned white ways have they begun to set up separate households away from their parents.

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Families with school-age children are the largest in the labor camps. The average family size for families with school-age offspring only is over 6.³ The families with both school and pre-school children averaged over 7 individuals.⁴ This probably reflects the high mortality rate of smaller children among the Desert People, whose new-born babies have a life expectancy of only 17 years.⁵

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Families with younger parents and all pre-school age children are, of course, smaller, running some 4 individuals, with nearly 2 children per family.⁶

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Migration to the cotton fields reinforces the tendency to break up the old Papago extended family into smaller units like our biological family households. This change is most complete among families living in labor camps all the time, having severed their reservation ties more or less completely.

¹Hunter, 1937, p. 391.

²Joseph, Spicer & Chesky, 1949, p. 45.

³10 families interviewed with 19 school children, 66.

⁴8 families with 10 school children, 1.88 average, and 14 pre-school, 1.78 average, had 57 persons, 7.185 average, plus.

⁵9 families with 15 children under 6 had 38 plus people.

⁶Secretary of the Interior, 1949, p. 12.

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The change in attitude toward the family is indicated by the thought habits of harvest workers as shown by their answers to inquiries as to whether the entire family was in the labor camp. Well over half replied that all their family was in the camp, although further questioning developed that actually relatives counted part of the traditional extended family remained on the reservations. These laborers were thinking in terms of the biological family rather than the traditional extended family group.¹

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Papago harvest hands are not as socially and economically independent of the relatives they leave behind on the reserves as one might think. Strong cultural ties bind them to their relatives. The farm laborers know they will return home for most of the year--the harvest season is only an interlude. Even during picking season, Papago laborers return to the reserves on religious occasions, and meet their relatives who cannot leave the reserves to earn cash. On the other side of the picture, the stay-at-home relatives care for the property and animals of the wage laborers while they work.

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Most frequently it is the older generation which has less knowledge of English and Anglo working habits that stays on the reserves. Among workers who recognize that part of their family stayed on the reserves, about 60% left parents.² One pattern of behavior for laboring Desert People is to leave school children with their grandparents on the reserves so their schooling will not be interrupted by the move to the cotton farms and back. Perhaps a sixth do so.³ Another pattern is for siblings to stay home to care for property left on the reserves. Again, about a sixth of the cotton pickers relied on such a relative in 1956.

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About one family of 10 is either so large or so poor that all members of the extended family leave the reserves to work, but go to different camps.⁴

¹60% of those asked said the whole family was in camp (21 of 35 families giving information).

²Of 19 families giving information, 12 had parents on the reservations--63.2%

³Of the 19 families, 3 left children with their grandparents--15.8%.

⁴This was true of 2 of the 19 families giving data, 10.5%.

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• [596] Again the key to the puzzle lies in lack of social sanctions in the Papago group in the camp. The Desert People come from several hamlets on their reserves to any camp, usually. There is no community leader nor community sanctions to motivate them. The "chief" turns out to be merely the patriarch leading one large extended family. Among this group of his own kin, he receives considerable respect, but carries less authority than many Anglo patriarchs. Among unrelated families, even those from his own village, he has none. This camp operators do not realize, having assumed that a Papago patriarch conforms to their concept of an Indian chief. (This mistake has been made repeatedly in U. S. history by Anglos who insisted upon projecting the concept of "chief" derived from Anglo-Saxon proto-history into American Indian society where it was not and is not true.)

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571 The heterogeneous group of Papagos in a camp no more constitute a socially integrated group with recognized and effective social sanctions than the racially heterogeneous residents of a miscellaneous camp. While they do not like being talked about by other Desert People, they do not act to forestall such talk as they would to keep their relatives and neighbors at home from talking. So camp grounds accumulate trash.

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179 In labor camps the Desert People are also away from home in mental attitude as much as in physical being. They feel themselves in a white man's world, where they should act as white men--and they see an example of uncleanly whites in labor camps as a pattern. They cannot act better than they are taught. They cannot act according to standards in the minds of cotton growers or city newspaper reporters which are invisible--they can learn only what they can copy from sight. This fact explains why what social scientists call "acculturation" (adjustment of people of one culture to habits of another) takes place when people meet face to face. An example from history illustrates clearly. The Papago word for "cat" is copied from the old Spanish cat call rather than the Spanish name-word because the Indians saw and heard Spaniards calling their cats, and could associate call and animal. They could not learn the Spanish name for cats, which was invisible and silent in the minds of the Spaniards.

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As it is, the horses kept by each family seem to run just slightly under the number allowed on permits assigned by the Council. Among families picking cotton, the average permit was for 7 horses.

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Papago harvest hands can go off and leave unplanted fields without worrying. But the laborer with cattle or horses has a problem. Three-fourths of the pickers with animals in 1950 left them in the care of some relative-- a brother, son, father, or uncle.¹ This fact is apparently one main reason for members of the Papago extended family remaining on the reserves while others go off to pick cotton. Along with the pattern of leaving children with their grandparents so they can continue uninterrupted in Indian Bureau schools, it illustrates the continuing economic function of the Papago extended family. Although the biological family is the main unit working for wages, in the wider economic picture it is the extended family which is the functioning unit.

The laborers who do not leave their animals in someone's care simply let them run loose on the reserve or occasionally a family will be able to bring its horses to a labor camp.

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On the reserved lands themselves, the labor market is relatively restricted. Employers are limited to the U. S. Indian Bureau (hiring over 100 Desert People)² the Papago Tribe (hiring half a dozen Papagos full time) the state and county highway departments, trading posts, and mines. These jobs generally require some degree of skill and training, and are filled by those of the Desert People who have had more educational opportunities. A high proportion of these employees are Presbyterians because of the emphasis Papago converts place upon education, and good quality of denomination schools.

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Many cotton harvesters recognize these fundamental reasons for their working. When they expressed their reasons for coming to the fields to labor, they said they came because "We don't have any fields," or "I didn't have a job," (the most frequent reply). Or some recognized the cause, but thought in the old mental paths of the Desert People: "There hasn't been any rain."

¹13 of the families giving data had permits for 31 head.
²9 of 18 families giving information did.
³Joseph, Spicer, and Cheky, 1940, p. 37.